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COMMON CONDITIONS, edited by Tucker Brooke; Yale and Oxford, the University Press, 1915.

There is evidence of the slow, silent passage of rare books from England to America in the fact that the authoritative edition of the important romantic comedy *Common Conditions* has been published in America from copies owned in America. In the past two decades many of our private and semi-public libraries have been enriched with Tudor and Stuart quartos, until the business of scholarly collation may often be carried on without leaving our shores or sending abroad for facsimiles. The Elizabethan Club of Yale is known to possess early editions of English drama, among which it numbers the only complete copy of *Common Conditions*. In editing this play Professor Tucker Brooke has issued the first number of a series of *Elizabethan Club Reprints* which doubtless proposes to publish the unique members of the fine collection.

Until recently *Common Conditions* was known to the world only in a mutilated copy defective by several leaves at beginning and end, the copy reprinted by Brandl in his *Quellen des weltlichen Dramas*. This quarto was for eighty years in the library of the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth House, until in 1914 it passed into the hands of H. E. Huntington, of New York. The Elizabethan Club quarto comes from Lord Mostyn's library at Mostyn Hall, whither it probably was brought toward the end of the seventeenth century. The two copies are not the same, for the distribution of lines is different and there are, according to Professor Brooke, "about two hundred significant variations in wording or typography." The Elizabethan Club quarto is clearly the older, for it contains more abbreviated spellings and its text is more accurate to the sense, in places where the Chatsworth quarto has erred through hasty copying. By supplying the title page, 212 lines at the beginning, and 260 at the end,¹ the elder edition has added materially to our knowledge of the play. We learn, for instance, that Brandl's identification of Lomia with Conditions is false. The title page conveys the important news that the play is "drawne out of the most famous historie of Galiarbus, Duke of Arabia, and of the good and eeuill successe of him and his two children, Sedmond his sun, and Clarisia his daughter." Where the story of Galiarbus was to be found is now unknown; but it is valuable to know that this primitive essay in romantic comedy is a dramatization of a novel, for thereby an explanation is suggested for the vagaries of the singular plot, which is essentially untheatrical. Moreover, *Common Conditions* now appears as another link between the later romantic drama and the medieval romantic prose tales, along with William Cornish's *Troilus and Cressida* and Richard Edwards's *Palemon and Arcite*.

¹ Professor Brooke's figures are not accurate. Brandl's reprint begins with line 212 and goes to line 1644, leaving 260 lines to the end (i.e. to line 1904), not 259. The 1432 lines between 212 and 1644 are equivalent to Brandl's 1421 lines, so that Brandl is 11 lines off in his count, instead of 2.

It is in the matter of plot, however, that the new edition contributes most. We learn that Galiarbus, "the olde Duke of Arabia," has been expelled from his native land by King Arbaccus through the machinations of certain parasites. He leaves behind him his two children, Clarisia and Sedmond, but these take also to flight on learning that the same enemies are preparing destruction for them. The bearer of the news is Common Conditions, the vice, who acts both as friend and fiend to most of the persons in the play. It was he who stirred up the suspicions of Arbaccus against Galiarbus and secured his banishment. This brings us to the scene of the tinkers with which Brandl's reprint opens. The brother and sister are separated: Sedmond to wander about as Nomides pursued by the unwelcome love of Sabia; Clarisia to make her way into Phrygia, where she finds a mate in Lamphedon, the king's son. The lovers, fleeing from the king's wrath, are captured by pirates under the leadership of Conditions, Lamphedon is cast overboard, and Clarisia is taken away by Conditions, ostensibly to be sold to the outlaw Cardolus, but really to be put under the protection of the benevolent knight Leostines. Lamphedon, meanwhile, makes his way to Cardolus, defeats him, finds that Clarisia is not in his castle, and is thereupon directed by Conditions to Leostines. Nomides, arriving somehow at the court of Leostines, falls in love with his sister Clarisia, now disguised under the name of Metrea, but fares no better at her hands than Sabia has done at his. Clarisia, despairing of reunion with Lamphedon, has resigned herself to fate and begs of Leostines only the boon of living a maid, her decent behavior so affecting her master that he adopts her as his heir. At this point the Brandl version ceases. The newly recovered ending upsets all the theories which critics have held, for it is abrupt and calamitous. Lamphedon regains Clarisia, and the two are on the point of fleeing together when Lomia, Clarisia's foolish maid, reveals their plans to Leostines. A cup of poison is the unexpected consummation of their woes. But still more surprising, just as Clarisia drains the cup, and before the fortunes of Sedmond and Sabia have been arranged, the Epilogue brings the play to a close by pleading that time enough has already been spent to weary the audience. The ending is sudden and strange, best explicable perhaps on the ground that the play was never put on the stage, but was merely a literary exercise in transmuting a tedious romance into dramatic form. What ultimately became of the various persons, whether the poison turned out to be no poison and Lamphedon and Clarisia were eventually joined, can only be learned by discovering the prose tale of Galiarbus.

To literary merit, as plays are usually judged, *Common Conditions* can put forward no claims. Its plot is a series of bunglings rising to a masterpiece of ineptitude. Compared to the drama of its time it is mean, for in character drawing, construction, and general imaginative impulse it ranks below the best of the popular

interludes, like *The Nice Wanton* and *Res Publica*; whereas in Edward's *Damon and Pithias* and still more in his lost *Palemon* and *Arcite* the literature possessed romantic drama of a superior kind. There has been a good deal of talk about the place of *Common Conditions* in the development of romantic drama, yet it still remains to be proved, I think, that this play or its fellows was productive of much influence. Because of its use of prose sources and its clinging to some of the characteristics of the old popular comedy it has its interest for the student of drama.

But I find much more interest in another direction, namely, in the provoking triangle formed by this play with *Cambises* and *Clyomon and Clamydes*. The drift of speculation has been to link these plays together in pairs, as Professor Kittredge has joined *Clyomon* and *Cambises*.² Professor Brooke is the first one, I believe, to suggest, however cautiously, that they may all be the work of Preston. This is an hypothesis which deserves respect. A thorough comparison may bring conclusive proof of an alliance which is now dubiously circumstantial. For the likenesses which Professor Brooke has gathered the reader may consult his Appendix. Granting a relationship between the three, we find that *Common Conditions* stands as a link between the other two, which themselves have not much in common save the verbal parallel which Professor Kittredge has noted. The bonds are strongest between *Clyomon* and *Conditions*; indeed the plays are so alike in incident, structure, characters, and feeling that one cannot escape from the conviction that they are by the same hand. They are indeed greatly like twin brothers. They have this in common, moreover, that they are both dramatizations of romantic narratives.³ Again, an examination of the two prologues shows a parallelism which may have meaning.

Clyomon and Clamydes:

"And doubting nought right Courteous all, in your accustomed woont
And gentle eares, our Author he, is prest to bide the brunt
Of bablers tongues, to whom he thinks, as frustrate all his toile,
As peereles taste to filthy Swine, which in the mire doth moile.
Well, what he hath done for your delight, he gaue not me in charge,
The Actors come, who shall expresse the same to you at large."

Common Conditions:

"For thus wee do perswade our selues, if simple Authors skill
Should Seneca exceede in verse, or Ouids pleasant quill:
Or could tell more then Tullies wit, eke Homer put a side,
Yet do wee deeme some Momus would him skorne, mocke, & deride.
But as he doth deepe low descend from these right famous wights:
So doth he stand in redines to bare those Momus spights.
Yet staies him on this steadfast hope, the wise his simple paine
Will well except, and that is all that hee dooth seeke to gaine.
Let this for preface you suffice, the actours redy stand,
Your patience earnestly wee craue to proceede out of hand."

² *Journal of Germanic Philology*, II p. 8.

³ See the title page of *Common Conditions* and the prologue of *Clyomon*.

It is such links as these which I would expect to find multiplied on examining the two plays. As I have said, the relationship between *Common Conditions* and *Cambises* is not so close, for the plots are quite different, and furthermore *Cambises* uses allegorical personages in the old morality style as the other plays do not. But there are links here too, the most notable being the verbal parallel with *Clyomon*. It may be significant that both prologues to *Cambises* and *Common Conditions* mention Tully and Seneca with respect, and it is certainly worthy of consideration that the opening scenes of the two plays show identical construction; that is, we are given first an expository scene to start the play, then a long soliloquy by the Vice, and upon that a comic scene between three rogues whose names ring like an echo,—Huff, Ruff, and Snuff in *Cambises*, and Shift, Drift, and Unthrif in *Common Conditions*. Furthermore, as Professor Brooke has pointed out, much the same kind of quarrel occurs in each play at this point.

These links are not fully convincing, but their argument collectively is pretty strong, enough to justify the thorough investigation I have proposed. The most notable likeness common to the three plays, however, I have not touched on, namely, the strong resemblance of the three vices, Ambidexter in *Cambises*, Subtle Shift in *Clyomon*, and Common Conditions. These persons have the quality of being neither quite good nor quite bad, but a mixture of both, mischievous sprites who constantly change masters and get people into trouble for the sake of getting them out again, in all cases for no reason whatever. It is their ambidexterity and their readiness to embrace both good and evil that set them apart from their cousins of the late vice-plays. They talk and act too much the same to be satisfactorily explained by any theory of tradition. Among the recovered portions of *Common Conditions* is given the fullest analysis of this vice psychology in the three plays. Conditions thus explains himself (line 157):

“ . . . there are two sorts of conditions as I ges.
For there are good and euell conditions the truth to confesse.
And to which of these twaine think you disposed am I ?
If I should say to good conditions you would reply.
On the contrary side, if I should say to euell I did cleaue,
Then euery Iack would thrust me out of dores streight by ye sleeue.
And therefore for my owne aduantage beleeeue me you may,
As nere as I can ile vse a mediocritie by the way.
And Mediocritie is my name though condicions they mee call,
Nere kind to dame fortune to raise and to let fall.”

It thus appears that the vice in this play is a rough embodiment of luck, as the vice in *Appius and Virginia* is the rough embodiment of man's evil passions.

It remains only to commend the publishers for the excellence of the paper and press work, and to speak of the edition. The faithfulness of the text to the original we shall have to take on trust, but there is every evidence of care. The notes are thorough and scholarly. Professor Brooke's comments at large on the play

are contained in the Introduction, which deals with matters of textual history and general appreciation, and the first Appendix, where the editor goes into the question of authorship. As I have said, he inclines to believe that this play along with *Clyomon and Clamydes* was written by Thomas Preston, author of *Cambises*. It is a pity that he has not gone more thoroughly into this important problem with the desire of arriving at a definite conclusion. Every opportunity should be seized of binding together more firmly the floating population of our pre-Shakespearean drama, of putting flesh and bones into the shadowy personalities of the early dramatists.

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THE VILLAIN AS HERO. A Review of a Review

The author of a book experiences a certain satisfaction in reading a review which centres criticism upon the point which he considers of most importance, even though the criticism be unfavorable. Of the reviews of *The Villain As Hero* which I have read, Professor Cooper's is the only one which recognizes the "main-spring of the dissertation" to be an attempt to examine Aristotle's generalization respecting the unfitness of the villain for the place of tragic hero by applying this generalization to various English tragedies. But Professor Cooper is mistaken in believing that my dissatisfaction with that generalization was due solely to my misinterpretation of a single term in it, and that had I used Bywater's translation of the *Poetics*, instead of Butcher's, I should have altered my conclusions.

The conclusions which I drew as the result of my study of English tragedies were that other emotions than pity and fear are tragic, that a villain under certain conditions may arouse tragic emotion, and that, consequently, Aristotle's generalization is not altogether valid. The main point in Professor Cooper's criticism is that if I had known that the term *Φιλάνθρωπον*, which Aristotle uses to describe the emotional effect of the downfall of a villain, meant "the human feeling in one," instead of "the moral sense," as Butcher translates it, I should have conceded that "Aristotle does recognize the success by some of the later Greek poets in doing what Shakespeare subsequently did with the clever villain and the brave wrong-doer in *Richard III* and *Macbeth*." Professor Cooper thus assumes that the basis of my work is a dissatisfaction with the term "moral sense" as an interpretation of our emotional response to the fate of villainy, and not dissatisfaction with the limitation of the tragic emotions to pity and fear; and that, the real meaning of Aristotle's term being now before me, I am willing to accept the phrase "the human feeling in one"